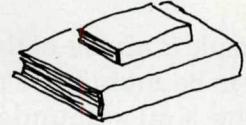
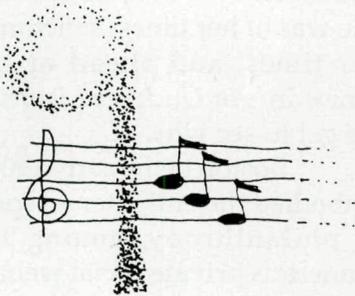


BOOK REVIEWS



Thomas Moore

Soul Mates. Harper
Perennial. N.Y. 1994. 267
pages. Paper.



Soul Mates and social work are both deeply involved in the same spiritual and philosophical areas. Both are concerned with helping people build and enhance relationships with each other, and with themselves. While Moore proposes his book is about "soulful" relationships, our work is about "helping" relationships. Are they the same?

What is the soul? Is it spirit, essence, morality, is it our spiritual being? Is it our unconscious laid bare by Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, or riddled with holes by Beethoven's ninth? "Alle Menschen werden Brüder." All mankind are brothers (and sisters), "soul brothers," and soul food, is that what the soul does, connect us with our roots? Does it connect and resonate like "soul music": the blues for African-Americans, slack key guitar for Hawaiians, klezmer music for the Jews?

Thomas Moore, sees the soul as a fundamental element in our ability to build relationships with people. Thus the title *Soul Mates* suggests a strong bond among people, a relationship which helps unite them in a way that overcomes difference and goes beyond the rational, mind-set. The heart has its own reasons, love is not rational because it is enmeshed in the soul. The soul is mystery, relationships are mysterious,

and love is a mysterious adventure. Why love this person and not that one? "A soul mate is someone to whom we feel profoundly connected, as though the communicating and communing takes place between us were not the product of intentional efforts, but rather a divine grace."

In *Soul Mates*, Moore offers a manual for "...fostering many kinds of soulful relationships, first by becoming aware of the nature of the soul, and especially its role in intimacy, and then by discovering concrete ways in which such relationships can be tended." His Jungian oriented therapeutic approach emerges through the support of myths and cross-cultural stories related to gods and goddesses who were the gatekeepers of intimacy and love. Case examples of people struggling to make connections, or to untangle crossed connections, and how they are helped through "soul work" add concrete foundations for the more spiritual aspects of the material.

Intimacy, creativity, imagination, sex, love and intermingled souls are the fundamental themes of *Soul Mates*, and Moore's work with individuals and families. And a large portion of the book deals with ways in which persons' souls do influence or could influence their lives. A fine

By Paul Abels,
Book Editor

example is his use of the film "A Trip to Bountiful" as a metaphor of the soul's abundance and resonance. While it seeks connections with the past, it needs to build relationships for its life in the future. The soul is bountiful and paradoxical, it has room for success and failure, bravery and fear. We can help the soul take a balanced place between attachment, solitude, and freedom. Moore also speaks to the need of the helper to examine how his/her own soul may impact the client. S/he must care for his/her own soul. On one occasion he discusses his own paranoia and reflects on how this might have interfered with the help he hoped to give. *Soul Mates* takes paying attention to, it is new territory, terra incognita if you will. He provides a map, but there are pitfalls, particularly for those of us who are used to more scientifically oriented texts. *Soul Mates* needs reading with the "third eye." If the eyes are the gateway to the soul, than this book provides the doorway. *Soul Mates* has rewards, not only as a guide book for helping, but as a source of enlightenment for the self in becoming a soulful person. *Soul Mates*: Read It. □

Bertha Capen Reynolds

An Uncharted Journey. First Edition by Citadel Press, N.Y. 1964. Second edition by Practitioners Press. Hebron Conn.

The essence of our profession, its spirit, is made available to us through the works of those who framed our profession, lending a vision to society of the social web that connected us with all people, joined in the struggle for social justice. The Abbots, Breckenridge, Addams, Florence Kelly, are just some of those who dreamed the good dream, and acted on their crusade. They were the first wave. They were not of my time.

For me, the spirit of the profession is embodied in the actions of Bertha Capen Reynolds.

A social work educator, practitioner, social activist, scholar, who in spite of the profession's disregard, contributed extensively to its growth, and stuck by it in spite of itself. She was of her times, a victim of her times, and ahead of her times. In *An Uncharted Journey*, we get to see why.

Boston in the early 1900's embodied the enlightened spirit of philanthropy, among the numerous private social welfare agencies it could boast 16 settlements, This atmosphere was instrumental in shaping Reynolds' world view. (Imagine what 16 settlement houses in Los Angeles might do to shape the community, pressure the city council, or influence young people in their career choices.) She attended one of the first classes for social workers in Boston, and then went on to a position with the prestigious Boston Children's Aid Society (BCAS). A growing concern with the number of war veterans

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